



Unitech Composites to Support Afghan Black Hawk Helicopters with Composite Weapons Pylons

HAYDEN, ID October 16, 2018 – Unitech Composites, a Unitech Aerospace company and leading supplier of complex composite laminates, components and assemblies for the commercial aerospace and defense markets, announced today that they will provide its Lightweight Armament Support Structure (LASS) weapons pylons for the UH-60A Black Hawks that the United States is supplying to the Afghan government.

The U.S. Army's Utility Helicopters Project Office (UHPO), headquartered in Huntsville, AL, is managing the overall Afghan Black Hawk helicopter program. Unitech's initial contract, with Science and Engineering Services (SES), is for the first three LASS shipsets, with the first one scheduled to deliver in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Unitech's LASS "wings" will be installed on UH-60A Black Hawks with fixed-forward-firing weapons, to both the Afghan Air Force and the special operations-dedicated Special Mission Wing (SMW). Published program requirements call for 58 of these weaponized Black Hawks. The Army Engineering Directorate (AED) is expected to issue an airworthiness release (AWR) prior to the Black Hawks being deployed in Afghanistan in late 2019.

"It is a great honor to supply the U.S. and Afghan warfighters with a lightweight composite solution that enables tremendous weapons capability," said Dan Kinney, Sr. Director for Business Development and Programs for Unitech Composites. "The UHPO will now have a solution to other approved foreign military sales customers who are interested in a Black Hawk helicopter that is a true multi-role utility and combat aircraft."

The LASS weapons pylons were originally supplied to the U.S. Army's Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) and they have been in operation for nearly 10 years. These composite wings were developed as a lightweight, corrosion resistant direct replacement for the External Fuel System (EFS) single-station weapons pylons that were installed on MH-60 DAP helicopters. Unitech's LASS weapons pylon are 52% lighter when compared to the legacy metallic EFS pylons and they reduce drag and maintain a neutral lift. LASS wings are easy to install and designed to fit existing UH-60A/L/M Black Hawk models with standard hardpoints. Depending on a customer's needs, LASS wings can be configured to support a variety of weapons configurations including 30 mm cannon, 50 cal guns, 2.75 inch rocket pods, and several missile payloads.

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The LASS will be on display in Moog's booth at Combat Helicopter on October 23 – 25, 2018 in Bucharest, Romania. For more information, please contact Dan Kinney, Sr. Director of Business Development and Programs at dkinney@unitechcomposites.com.



MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter armed with Unitech's Lightweight Armament Support Structure (LASS) weapons pylon.

About Unitech Composites

Unitech Composites, established in 1979 and located in Hayden, Idaho, are industry experts in complex laminates and components and assemblies, multi-axis machining, close tolerance fabrication and hand layup. Unitech Composites is a Unitech Aerospace company.

About Unitech Aerospace

Unitech Aerospace provides the aerospace, marine, medical, defense, nuclear and rail industries with composite and metallic structures and components that meet demanding and complex requirements. The company's growing global footprint is currently comprised of strategically located sites providing local and immediate support to customers. Integrated solutions range from early stage design, rate production, to full-term sustainment making Unitech Aerospace the industry's trusted lifecycle partner.

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